

Stakes Race Recap



CHURCHILL DOWNS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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ROMANTIC VISION SKIMS WAY TO FIRST STAKES WIN IN GRADE III LOCUST GROVE

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (Saturday, Sept. 16, 2017) – G. Watts Humphrey Jr.'s homebred **Romantic Vision** skimmed the rail to take command in deep stretch and collect her first career stakes win in Saturday's 34th running of the \$100,000 Locust Grove (Grade III) for fillies and mares at Churchill Downs.

Trained by **Rusty Arnold Jr.** and ridden by **Brian Hernandez Jr.**, Romantic Vision covered the 1 1/16 miles on a fast main track in 1:43.91 at odds of 10-1.

"Brian gets along with her so well and it really showed today," Arnold said. "He gave her a great trip up the rail and we really couldn't have asked for anything more."

Breaking from post No. 4 in the field of seven fillies and mares, Romantic Vision sat just off the uncontested pacesetter **Brooklynsway**, who led the field of seven through quarter-mile fractions of :24.22 and 48.93. Hernandez had Romantic Vision positioned along the rail when Brooklynsway began to fade and 3-2 favorite **Blue Prize (ARG)** took over around the far turn clocking six furlongs in 1:13.60. Romantic Vision cut the corner running, grabbed the lead with an eighth of a mile to run and held the favorite at bay to win by 1 1/4 lengths.

"We just got a dream trip behind the speed," Hernandez said. "When the rail opened up she just responded perfectly and ran on well."

Romantic Vision, a 5-year-old Kentucky-bred daughter of Lemon Drop Kid by the Giant's Causeway mare Perfect for You, returned \$23.60, \$8.80 and \$5.40 as the second longest shot in the field. Blue Prize (ARG), ridden by **James Graham**, returned \$3.40 and \$2.60 with **Tiger Moth** finishing another three-quarters of a length back in third under **Corey Lanerie** and paying \$2.60 to show.

Mo d'Amour, Fuhriously Kissed, Sweetgrass and Brooklynsway completed the order of finish.

The victory was worth \$60,760 to Romantic Vision and increased her earnings to \$310,086 with a record of 18-5-4-2. Earlier this year, she finished second to **Big World** in the \$300,000 La Troienne Presented by Spirited Funds (GI) on Kentucky Oaks Day.

This was the second Locust Grove victory for Humphrey, who won the 2015 renewal with **Frivolous**.

The Locust Grove is named after the 1790 Georgian mansion in Louisville that played home to ancestors of Churchill Downs founder Col. M. Lewis Clark.

LOCUST GROVE QUOTES

BRIAN HERNANDEZ JR., jockey of ROMANTIC VISION (winner): "We just got a dream trip behind the speed. When the rail opened up she just responded perfectly and ran on well. When I rode her in the La Troienne (Grade I) she really responded well that day over this racetrack, too."

RUSTY ARNOLD II, trainer of ROMANTIC VISION (winner): "She essentially fell on her head out of the gate in her last start (Summer Colony Stakes) at Saratoga. Brian (Hernandez Jr.) gets along with her so well and it really showed today and even when he rode her in the past. He gave her a great trip up the rail and we really couldn't have asked for anything more."

IGNACIO CORREAS IV, trainer of BLUE PRIZE (ARG) (runner-up): "I think she found herself on the lead sooner than I thought she would. She needed a target and she didn't have any, but other than that she ran good. She ran her eyeballs out. We're happy and we'll send her to the Spinster (GI) (at Keeneland). She keeps getting better."

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JAMES GRAHAM, jockey on BLUE PRIZE (ARG) (runner-up): “I probably waited with her a little too long today, but in hindsight he told me to be patient and I was. The other filly got up the fence in a spot in which no horses have come all day. I was trying to keep in the position she was in and running forward – and she was running. When that filly (Romantic Vision) ran by her she went after her, but she couldn’t get there.”

BRAD COX, trainer of TIGER MOTH (third): “She ran well. There was just not much pace to run at. We kind of knew that going in. I thought Corey (jockey Corey Lanerie) put her in a good position, but it just wasn’t her day. It just didn’t set-up in front of her like she probably needs it to. But actually it was the best race she’s run at Churchill so far. I thought for a while that she didn’t like Churchill, but it wasn’t that. There just wasn’t enough pace. “

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